**STATE OF MAINE**

**Governor’s Energy Office**



**RFA# 202312239**

**Maine Grid Resilience Grant Program**

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| --- | --- |
| **RFA Coordinator** | *All communication regarding the RFA must be made through the RFA Coordinator identified below.*  **Name:** Allie Rand **Title:** Energy Policy Analyst  **Contact Information:** [allie.rand@maine.gov](mailto:allie.rand@maine.gov) |
| **Informational Webinar** | **Date:** February 28, 2024 **Time:** 12:00 – 1:00 PM  **Location:** Via ZOOM: <https://mainestate.zoom.us/j/84598941690> |
| **Submitted Questions** | *All questions must be submitted, by e-mail, to the RFA Coordinator no later than:*  **Date:** March 7, 2024, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time.  Submission emails must include **“RFA# 202312239 Questions”** in the subject line of the e-mail. |
| **Application Submission Period** | *Applications must be received by the Division of Procurement Services by:*  **Submission Deadline:** March 28, 2024, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time.  Applications must be submitted electronically to the Division of Procurement Services at [proposals@maine.gov](mailto:proposals@maine.gov) and must include **“RFA# 202312239 Application – [Applicant’s Name]”** in the subject line of the e-mail. |

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Page** |
|  |  |
| **DEFINITIONS** | **3** |
|  |  |
| **DETAILS AND INSTRUCTIONS** | **4** |
| 1. Application Purpose and Background |  |
| 1. General Provisions 2. Eligibility to Submit Applications 3. Number of Awards 4. Contract Terms 5. Annual Application Submittals |  |
|  |  |
| **ACTIVITIES AND REQUIREMENTS**   1. Types of Grants 2. Application Components | **7** |
|  |  |
| **KEY PROCESS EVENTS** | **11** |
| 1. Informational Meetings 2. Submitting Questions about the Request for Applications |  |
| 1. Amendments to the Request for Applications 2. Submitting an Application |  |
| **APPLICATION EVALUATION AND SELECTION** | **13** |
| 1. Scoring Weight and Process   **N.** Selection and Award **O.** Appeal of Contract Awards |  |
| **APPLICATION** | **15** |
|  |  |

**RFA TERMS/ACRONYMS with DEFINITIONS**

The following terms and acronyms, as referenced in the RFA, shall have the meanings indicated below:

| **Term/Acronym** | **Definition** |
| --- | --- |
| **Applicable Uses** | As defined by the US Department of Energy, the following are applicable uses under the program:   1. weatherization technologies and equipment; 2. fire-resistant technologies and fire prevention systems; 3. monitoring and control technologies; 4. the undergrounding of electrical equipment; 5. utility pole management; 6. the relocation of power lines or the reconductoring of power lines with low-sag, advanced conductors; 7. vegetation and fuel-load management; 8. the use or construction of distributed energy resources for enhancing system adaptive capacity during disruptive events, including:    1. microgrids; and    2. battery-storage subcomponents; 9. adaptive protection technologies; 10. advanced modeling technologies; 11. hardening of power lines, facilities, substations, of other systems; and 12. the replacement of old overhead conductors and underground cables. |
| **BIL** | Bipartisan Infrastructure Law |
| **Community** | May include but is not limited to municipal government, Tribal Government, plantation, township, or unorganized territory in Maine |
| **Department** | Governor’s Energy Office |
| **DOE** | US Department of Energy |
| **Eligible Entity** | 1. an electric grid operator; 2. an electricity storage operator; 3. an electricity generator; 4. a transmission owner or operator; 5. a distribution provider; 6. a fuel supplier; and 7. any other relevant entity, as determined by the Secretary of the US Department of Energy (DOE). |
| **New Generation** | Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Section 40101 prohibits a grant awarded to an Eligible Entity under the program being used for construction of a new electric generating facility. In this context, new generation is defined as construction of a facility that produces electricity, including emergency back-up generation, solar generation or any other electric generation unit or facility. |
| **Power Line** | The term “power line” includes a transmission line or a distribution line, as applicable. Distribution power lines are considered to be below 69kV. |
| **PUC** | Maine Public Utilities Commission |
| **RFA** | Request for Application |
| **State** | State of Maine |
| **Small Utility** | As defined in BIL Section 40101(h)(2) for the purpose of this grant program, a Small Utility sells not more than 4,000,000 megawatt hours of electricity per year. Note that an entity that is not a transmission and distribution utility may satisfy this definition of Small Utility (refer to “Eligible Entities” above.) |
| **Small Utility Set Aside** | DOE requires the percentage of funds made available through this RFA to eligible entities that sell not more than 4,000,000 megawatt hours of electricity per year is not less than the percentage of all customers in the state served by small utility entities |
| **Weatherization** | Technologies or equipment that can be used to enhance reliability and resiliency of electric grid components in preparation for extreme weather conditions. |

**Maine Grid Resilience Grant Program**

**RFA# 202312239**

**Details and Instructions**

## Application Purpose and Background

The Governor’s Energy Office (GEO) is seeking project proposals that increase the resilience of the electric grid, decrease the frequency and duration of electric grid outages, and advance grid modernization and deployment of clean energy resources while expanding existing and/or creating clean energy workforce opportunities for Maine people. This document provides instructions for submitting proposals, the procedure, and criteria by which the awarded Bidder will be selected, and the contractual terms which will govern the relationship between the State of Maine (State) and the awarded Bidder.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), Section 40101(d), established the Grid Resilience Formula Grant Program administered by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to improve the all-hazards resilience of the electric grid. The GEO, as the designated state energy agency, administers the formula fund on behalf of the State of Maine. Since the initial release of the program guidelines by DOE in July 2022, the GEO has led a planning process to design a program that meets the DOE requirements, incorporates equity and community input, and advances Maine’s energy policy objectives. In its application to the DOE, the GEO established that it would utilize a competitive solicitation for project proposals to allocate funds in a manner that generates the greatest community benefit, in accordance with the federal program requirements.

The Grid Resilience Formula Grant program aligns with Maine’s ongoing work to address the current and future impacts of climate change. Through bipartisan legislation, Maine has committed to ambitious greenhouse gas emissions reductions of 45% below 1990 levels by 2030 and 80% by 2050, as well as achieving carbon neutrality by 2045. The state has a renewable portfolio standard of 80% by 2030, and Governor Janet Mills has announced a goal of 100% clean energy by 2040. The Maine Climate Council, formed in 2019 by Governor Mills through L.D. 1679, convened throughout 2019 and 2020, and published the *Maine Won’t Wait* climate action plan in December of 2020. Four overarching goals are established in *Maine Won’t Wait*: reducing Maine’s greenhouse gas emissions; avoiding the impacts and costs of inaction; fostering economic opportunity and prosperity and; advancing equity through the climate response. These four goals are carried through in the objectives of this program through a focus on improving the resilience of the electric grid and Maine communities to disruptive events such as storms due to climate change, as well as supporting workforce development and an equitable transition to renewable energy sources.

In addition to Maine’s climate legislation, several recent grid modernization studies and stakeholder processes provide a roadmap for resilience and decarbonization priorities and pathways for the state. In spring 2022, Electric Power Engineers (EPE) provided a Distribution System Gap Analysis report to Central Maine Power (CMP), Versant Power (Versant), and the Maine Public Utilities Commission (PUC).[[1]](#footnote-2) The EPE report recommended priority areas including, but not limited to, voltage control capabilities, demand-side management and advanced forecasting through time-series data and new full-time staff for utilities to work on electrical vehicles and electrification. The legislature has recently required, through the enactment of LD 1959, “An Act Regarding Utility Accountability and Grid Planning for Maine’s Clean Energy Future,” that utilities undergo a new process for grid planning.[[2]](#footnote-3) This process, initiated in fall of 2022, began with stakeholder engagement to identify priorities that the utilities must address, and is ongoing at the time of publishing this Request for Applications. Public Law 2022, chapter 702 requires this process to occur every 5 years going forward. The Maine Public Utilities Commission (PUC) is leading this Stakeholder Process in Docket 2022-00322, “Proceeding to Identify Priorities for Grid Plan Filings.”[[3]](#footnote-4)

The GEO has conducted several key studies in the past several years to advance *Maine Won’t Wait* strategies to reduce carbon emissions and grow Maine’s clean energy economy. In 2021, GEO published an assessment of the state’s renewable energy market and included pathways to achieve Maine’s 80% renewable portfolio standard by 2030.[[4]](#footnote-5) This study identified expanded transmission infrastructure as a key factor in driving renewable development. The GEO’s 2022 Energy Storage Market Assessment shows that both grid-connected storage and customer-sited storage have the potential to provide benefits to Maine’s electric grid, especially through shifting the electricity load profile from when it is generated to when there is customer demand.[[5]](#footnote-6) A series of reports supporting clean energy workforce development literature and research in Maine provide strategic recommendations, highlighted in the GEO’s 2022 Clean Energy Workforce Analysis Report.[[6]](#footnote-7) With clean energy workers in the state indicating high satisfaction with their careers, Maine has a significant opportunity to bridge the workforce gap by expanding outreach and raising awareness of the benefits of clean energy careers amongst key populations in the state, including within disadvantaged or historically underserved communities.

Proposals submitted under this program should seek to clearly identify alignment with these ongoing, emerging, and related bodies of work through completion of the accompanying application form.

## General Provisions

1. From the time this RFA is issued until award notification is made, all contact with the State regarding this RFA must be made through the RFA Coordinator identified on the cover page of this RFA. No other person/State employee is empowered to make binding statements regarding this RFA. Violation of this provision may lead to disqualification from the application process, at the State’s discretion.
2. The Applicant shall take careful note that in evaluating its application submitted in response to this RFA the Department will consider materials provided in the application and internal Departmental information of previous contract history, if any, with the Applicant. The Department also reserves the right to consider other reliable references and publicly available information in evaluating the Applicant’s experience and capabilities.
3. All submissions in response to this RFA will be public records, available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) ([1 M.R.S. § 401](http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/1/title1sec401.html) et seq.).
4. All applicable laws, whether or not herein contained, shall be included by this reference. It shall be the Applicant’s responsibility to determine the applicability and requirements of any such laws and to abide by them.

## Eligibility to Submit Applications

Consistent with federal requirements, entities eligible to apply must be:

1) An electric grid operator;

2) An electricity storage operator;

3) An electricity generator;

4) A transmission owner or operator;

5) A distribution provider;

6) A fuel supplier;

7) Any other relevant entity, as determined by the Secretary (of DOE).

In the attached application form, applicants must explain and provide relevant documentation supporting a determination by the GEO and DOE that the applicant is an eligible entity. Applicants that do not fall into the eligible entity categories above must undergo an eligibility designation review process for DOE approval.

## Number of Awards

The Department anticipates making two (2) or more awards as a result of the RFA process. The number and size of awards will depend on the number of applications received, likely impact of the proposed work, and available funds. Awards will not exceed $2 million per project proposal for this initial round of grants. The Department reserves the right to eliminate the lowest scoring application(s) and/or make awards at amounts less than that requested, whichever is in the best interest of the State.

Funding for this program is provided through Section 40101(d) of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. For this round of grant applications, up to $4,146,309 is available to be awarded. $1,036,577 will be set aside for the highest scoring bidder(s) who meets the small utility set aside requirements.[[7]](#footnote-8) $1,036,577 is the minimum amount set aside for small utilities and does not limit the amount of funding that may be awarded to small utilities. The Department may award all, part, or none of this allocation at its discretion.

Maximum Award: $2 million is the maximum individual award for either small or large utility entities.

Awards will be provided based on the likely impact of the proposed work on generating the greatest community benefit through the proposed resilience project. Project proposals should demonstrate benefits that include but are not limited to increased resilience, reduced outages, reduced energy burden, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and increased clean energy workforce development through creating and/or providing meaningful training opportunities as a result of the resilience project.

Priority Applications: The Department intends to prioritize awards that increase community and economic resilience to extreme events and empower electric customers and communities to be resilient to disruptive events; projects that benefit areas identified as disadvantaged communities; and projects that indicate partnership with communities.

1. **Contract Terms**

Contract terms will be up to five (5) years, as specified by the applicant’s proposal.

The expected start of the grant performance period is on or around March 2024.

1. **Future Grant Rounds and Application Submittals**

The Department anticipates future grant rounds to occur at approximately 12-month intervals through 2026. A potential schedule of future rounds would be:

Round 2: Summer/Fall 2024

Round 3: Summer/Fall 2025

Round 4: Summer/Fall 2026

**Maine Grid Resilience Grant Program**

**RFA# 202312239**

**Activities and Requirements**

# 

1. **Grants**

**Eligible Activities**

In alignment with federal program rules, the GEO is seeking proposals for projects that generate the greatest community benefit in fulfilling one or more of the core program objectives listed below. The program objectives are not listed in order of preference or rank, but rather identified by number for ease of reference throughout this document and throughout applicant responses.

**Program Objectives**

1. Increase the resilience of the electric grid and/or decrease the frequency of outages, including within disadvantaged communities and areas experiencing high frequency and/or long duration outages;
2. Improve community and economic resilience and empower electric customers and communities to be resilient to disruptive events;
3. Increase clean energy workforce opportunities; and
4. Align with ongoing electric grid modernization and state policy climate goals while mitigating disproportionate energy burdens.

Each proposal must clearly indicate how the project will fulfill program objectives. Eligible activities, technologies, equipment, and hardening measures to reduce the likelihood and consequences of disruptive events are listed here:

1. weatherization technologies and equipment
2. fire-resistant technologies and fire prevention systems
3. monitoring and control technologies
4. the undergrounding of electrical equipment
5. utility pole management
6. the relocation of power lines or the reconductoring of power lines with low-sag, advanced conductors
7. vegetation and fuel-load management
8. the use or construction of distributed energy resources for enhancing system adaptive capacity during disruptive events, including:
   1. microgrids; and
   2. battery-storage subcomponents
9. adaptive protection technologies
10. advanced modeling technologies
11. hardening of power lines, facilities, substations, of other systems; and
12. the replacement of old overhead conductors and underground cables, and
13. other measures as determined or approved by DOE.

**Per federal requirements, non-eligible uses include construction of a new electric generating facility or large-scale battery storage facility that is not used for enhancing system adaptive capacity during disruptive events; or cybersecurity.**

The GEO, in alignment with the primary program objectives, is seeking project proposals that include the examples listed below in Table 1. The examples are meant to be illustrative and additional project proposals not listed below will be considered, if the applicant demonstrates consistency with program objectives. Applications will need to indicate anticipated impact, build, and resilience metrics associated with the proposed project.

Applicants should identify disadvantaged or priority communities that would benefit from the resilience project. Disadvantaged communities may be identified utilizing the federal mapping tool Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)[[8]](#footnote-9) and/or methods described in the Community Benefits section of the application [Section H-3 below] that demonstrate how the communities are disparately burdened by outages.

As stated in D. above, the GEO will prioritize project proposals that increase community and economic resilience to extreme events and empower electric customers and communities to be resilient to disruptive events; projects that benefit areas identified as disadvantaged communities; and projects that indicate partnership with communities.

**Table 1: Example Project Menu**

|  |
| --- |
| **Example Projects** |
| Proposed resilience project activities [see “Applicable Uses,” p.g. 3] at worst-performing circuits and/or in areas identified as disadvantaged or disparately vulnerable to grid outages |
| Battery components for microgrid deployment to enhance system adaptive capacity during disruptive events at critical facilities |
| Deploying automatic load management systems |
| Deploying dynamic line rating systems |
| Three-phase location modeling |
| Implementation of SCADA for distribution feeders |
| Planning or implementation supporting time series load data capabilities at the feeder level |
| Replacing generation components with new components of the same type in order to ensure weatherization/resilience, such as wind turbine blade replacement or damaged solar photovoltaic cells within an existing solar farm |
| Building inventories of parts and components needed for providing grid resilience benefits |
| Training and contracts for critical maintenance needs |
| Refurbishment of existing transformers |

**It is the applicants’ responsibility to ensure that the proposed activities meet all eligibility requirements.**

**Cost Match**

As determined by the federal program guidelines and the GEO, a cost match will apply for recipients of funds under this program. The applicable cost match requirement that will be used for project award selection is provided in the table below. The GEO reserves the right to alter a cost match during award negotiations within the ranges given in Table 2 below.

**Table 2**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Entity Type** | **Total Cost Match Required** |
| **Small Utilities.** As defined in BIL Section 40101(h)(2) for the purpose of this grant program, a Small Utility sells not more than 4,000,000 megawatt hours of electricity per year. | Between 33.33% and 48.33% |
| **Large Utilities**. A Large Utility entity sells over 4,000,000 megawatt hours of electricity per year. | Between 100% and 115% |

All funded projects will be required to report quarterly and annually on project progress and resilience impact metrics, as well as an annual report on project performance metrics. Applicants should familiarize themselves with the report templates linked below for an example of reporting requirements and metrics of interest. An example reporting template can be found in the Excel document embedded below. Double click on the icon to access the document.



All awards require written notice and approval by the U.S. Department of Energy prior to agreement finalization. The GEO cannot execute a proposed project or issue subawards for projects without DOE review and written determination of project approval. Applicants should be aware that federal review processes, such as [National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)](https://www.energy.gov/nepa/nepa-guidance-requirements), [Build America Buy America (BABA)](https://www.energy.gov/management/build-america-buy-america), and the [Research, Technology and Economic Security](https://www.energy.gov/ia/research-technology-economic-security) (RTES) review, may involve additional review periods prior to award approval.

## Application Components

A complete and scoreable application for funding will include the following components described below. Specific descriptions of each component are included in the required application form. An application checklist is included here for ease of reference:

* Maine Grid Resilience Grant Application Form (found at the end of this RFA)
* Environmental Questionnaire (NEPA)
* Budget Justification Form
* Appendix A: Performance Metrics Checklist

**1. General Information, Eligibility, and Application Information**

1. Applicants must complete the following documents as part of their application:
   1. Application Cover Page & General Assurances
   2. Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification
   3. Eligibility and Applicant Information (see Section C above)

**2. Summary of Proposed Project and Alignment with Program Objectives** (Criteria 2: 25 total points available)

For each applicable objective as listed in Section G, an indication of how the proposed project meets stated objective, while also at a minimum not undermining the other core program objectives. Applicant should include a description of how success will be tracked through a description of how the applicant will provide reporting on metrics, drawing upon applicable metrics from the example metrics listed in the [U.S. DOE Grid Deployment Office’s Guidance for Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Grid Resilience Formula Grant Metrics](https://netl.doe.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/Guidance-for-Bipartisan-Infrastructure-Law-Grid-Resilience-Formula-Grant-Metrics-Tracking.pdf).

**3. Grid and Community Benefits** (Criteria 3: 30 points available)

1. Applicants may utilize both qualitative and quantitative factors in response to the questions for each of the sections**.**
2. The extent to which the proposed project provides benefits to the electric grid, customer, and community. Where possible, data should consider current conditions and forecasted load increase from beneficial electrification and increased frequency of storms as a result of climate change, and indicate methods and data used. See the [Guidance for Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Grid Resilience Formula Grant Metrics](https://netl.doe.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/Guidance-for-Bipartisan-Infrastructure-Law-Grid-Resilience-Formula-Grant-Metrics-Tracking.pdf) for examples of metrics to track benefits associated with the electric grid, customer, and communities;
3. The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates reduced energy burden within the community or communities;
4. A description of how the project will incorporate customer and community participation and feedback mechanisms, including but not limited to customer and community benefits, and community engagement in identifying critical facilities; description should include description of consultation and engagement with communities to date and identify areas where community input was sought on the project. Refer to “Equity and community benefit metrics” in [DOE’s metrics guidance document](https://netl.doe.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/Guidance-for-Bipartisan-Infrastructure-Law-Grid-Resilience-Formula-Grant-Metrics-Tracking.pdf).
5. A description of how the project will lead to the creation of high-quality jobs in Maine; metrics of interest include but are not limited to number of new clean energy jobs in the state in the years following the resilience project; number of Maine businesses and contractors engaged in resilience project activities; number of Maine high school and secondary career and technical education (CTEs) engaged in resilience project activities; location of businesses and subcontractors receiving funds from the project. Refer to “Equity and community benefit metrics” in [DOE’s metrics guidance document](https://netl.doe.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/Guidance-for-Bipartisan-Infrastructure-Law-Grid-Resilience-Formula-Grant-Metrics-Tracking.pdf) for additional information.
6. Throughout the qualitative and quantitative components of the project proposals, the extent to which the proposed project contributes to or goes beyond the [Justice40](https://www.energy.gov/diversity/doe-justice40-covered-programs) objective of 40% of the benefits of climate and clean energy investments flowing to disadvantaged communities.
7. Applicants should refer to the following sources to complete the Community Benefits section of the application form:
8. Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), [access the link here](https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#3/33.47/-97.5)
9. Energy Justice Dashboard: US Department of Energy’s Energy Justice Dashboard, [access the link here](https://energyjustice.egs.anl.gov/)

**4. Technical Merit and Feasibility** (Criteria 4: 30 points available)

1. A description of the current stage of project planning; Please provide a detailed explanation of your proposed project expenses organized by task using the provided [SF-424 Budget Justification Form](https://netl.doe.gov/sites/default/files/2023-07/Budget-Justification-BIL%2040101d.xlsx) (see #6 below).
2. Financial need to the applicant and demonstration of how the funds will aid in the successful completion of the project within one to five years;
3. Description of other federal or state funding sources the applicant has or could consider, including whether the project is eligible or may be eligible for cost recovery, if the applicant is a regulated entity
4. Description of how the project meets the goals of [Maine Won’t Wait](https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/inline-files/MaineWontWait_December2020.pdf), including achieving 80% of electricity generated by 2030 per the state’s Renewable Portfolio Standard, with a goal of 100% by 2040; indication of how project will not increase reliance on non-renewable sources;
5. A description of how the project will fulfil at a minimum one of the core program objectives, while also at a minimum not undermining the other core program objectives;
6. Efficient use of program funds, for example through leveraging, matching, securitization;
7. Indication whether the proposed project location(s) is within a floodplain, including how the floodplain is defined;
8. Demonstrated ability to comply with all applicable federal requirements, including Buy America and Davis-Bacon Act requirements.

**5. Partnerships and Letters of Support** (Criteria 5: 15 points available)

In support of the Grid and Community Benefits component of this application, Applicants are strongly encouraged to demonstrate existing, new or planned partnerships with communities and community entities through documentation such as a letter of support or Memorandum of Understanding. Examples of entities include but are not limited to organizations that work with local communities, disadvantaged communities, and stakeholders that are most vulnerable to or affected by the project, and organizations that carry out workforce development programs.

**6. Budget Justification (Required)**

Applicants must provide a [Budget Justification Form](https://netl.doe.gov/sites/default/files/2023-07/Budget-Justification-BIL%2040101d.xlsx) detailing the cost of the grant and where specific funds will be allocated.

**7. Environmental Questionnaire – NEPA (Required)**

Applicants must provide a completed [Environmental Questionnaire](https://www.netl.doe.gov/sites/default/files/2018-02/451_1-1-3.pdf) covering the subaward activity.

**8. Appendix A: Performance Metrics Checklist (Required)**

**Maine Grid Resilience Grant Program**

**RFA# 202312239**

**Key Process Events**

## Informational Meetings

The Department will host an Informational Meeting concerning the RFA via Zoom. Time and a web link to the meeting are provided on the cover page of this RFA.

The purpose of the Informational Meeting is to provide information about the grant program, answer and/or field questions, clarify for potential Applicants any aspect of the RFA requirements that may be necessary and provide supplemental information to assist potential Applicants in submitting responses to the RFA. Although attendance at the Informational Meeting is not mandatory, it is strongly encouraged that interested Applicants attend.

## Submitting Questions about the Request for Applications

Any questions must be submitted by e-mail and received by the RFA Coordinator identified on the cover page of this RFA, as soon as possible but no later than the date and time specified on the RFA cover page. Submitted Questions must include the subject line: “RFA# 202312239 Questions”. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete/on time e-mail transmission and receipt.

Question & Answer Summary: Responses to all questions will be compiled in writing and posted on the Division of Procurement Services [Grant RFPs and RFAs](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/grants) website. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain a copy of the Question & Answer Summary. Only those answers issued in writing on this website will be considered binding.

## Amendments to the Request for Applications

All amendments (if any) released in regard to this Request for Applications will be posted on the Division of Procurement Services [Grant RFPs and RFAs](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/grants) website. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain amendments. Only those amendments posted on this website are considered binding.

## Application Submission

* 1. **Applications Due:** Applications must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. local time, on the date listed on the cover page of the RFA. E-mails containing original application submissions, or any additional or revised application files, received after the 11:59 p.m. deadline will be rejected without exception.

If the need arises, the Department may reopen this RFA.

1. **Submission Instructions:** Applications are to be submitted electronically to the State of Maine Division of Procurement services, via e-mail, to [proposals@maine.gov](mailto:proposals@maine.gov).
   1. Proposal submission e-mails that are successfully received by the [proposals@maine.gov](mailto:proposals@maine.gov) inbox will receive an automatic reply stating as such.
   2. Only applications received by e-mail will be considered. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete e-mail transmission and receipt.
   3. E-mails containing links to file sharing sites or online file repositories will not be accepted as submissions. Only e-mail applications that have the actual requested files attached will be accepted.
   4. Encrypted e-mails received which require opening attachments and logging into a proprietary system will not be accepted as submissions. Please check with your organizations Information Technology team to ensure your security settings will not encrypt your proposal submission.
   5. File size limits are 25MB per e-mail. Applicants may submit files across multiple e-mails, as necessary, due to file size concerns. All e-mails and files must be received by the due date and time listed above.
   6. Applicants are to insert the following into the subject line of their e-mail submission: “**RFA# 202312239 Application – [Applicant’s Name]**”.
   7. Applications are to be submitted as a single, typed, PDF or Word file and contain the completed application form (found on p. 14) and all relevant attachments as described above in H. Application Components.

**Maine Grid Resilience Grant Program**

**RFA# 202312239**

**Application Evaluation and Selection**

## Scoring Weights and Process

## Applications will be scored by a qualified review team in accordance with the scoring approach outlined below. The attached application form linked at the final page of this document includes specific descriptions of what information we are requesting to evaluate your application, along with the total points available.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Scoring Criteria** | | **Points Available** |
| **Criteria 1: General Information, Eligibility, and Completeness** | Pass/Fail | |
| **Criteria 1a: Cost Match** | ***Large Utility*** | ***Small Utility*** |
| Between 100% and 115% match – Compliance Review | Between 33.33% and 48.33% match – Compliance Review |
| **Criteria 2: Project Summary and Alignment with Program Narrative Objectives** | Objective Alignment | Points Available |
| Objective #1 – Increased Grid Resilience | 5 |
| Objective #2 – Increased Community Resilience | 10 |
| Objective #3 – Workforce and Quality Jobs | 5 |
| Objective #4 – Grid Modernization and Policy Alignment | 5 |
| **Criteria 3: Grid & Community Benefits** | 30 | |
| **Criteria 4: Technical Merit and Feasibility** | 30 | |
| **Criteria 5: Partnerships and Letters of Support** | 15 | |
| **Total Points** | 100 points | |

An evaluation team, composed of qualified reviewers, will judge the merits of the applications received in accordance with the components defined in the RFA section H. “Application Components” and broken down into the scoring sections in the table above.  
  
For applications that demonstrate meeting the eligibility requirements in Criteria 1 and 1a, the evaluation team will use a consensus approach to evaluate and score the remaining Criteria sections shown above. Members of the evaluation team will not score those sections individually but, instead, will arrive at a consensus as to assignment of points for each of those sections.

1. **Selection and Award**
   1. The final decision regarding the award of the contract will be made by representatives of the Department subject to approval by the State Procurement Review Committee.
   2. Notification of conditional award selection or non-selection will be made in writing by the Department.
   3. Issuance of the RFA in no way constitutes a commitment by the State of Maine to award a contract, to pay costs incurred in the preparation of a response to the RFA, or to pay costs incurred in procuring or contracting for services, supplies, physical space, personnel or any other costs incurred by the Bidder.
   4. The Department reserves the right to reject any and all applications or to make multiple awards.
2. **Appeal of Contract Awards**

Any person aggrieved by the award decision that results from the RFA may appeal the decision to the Director of the Bureau of General Services in the manner prescribed in [5 M.R.S.A. § 1825-E](http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/5/title5sec1825-E.html) and [18-554 Code of Maine Rules Chapter 120](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/policies-procedures/chapter-120).  The appeal must be in writing and filed with the Director of the Bureau of General Services, 9 State House Station, Augusta, Maine, 04333-0009 within 15 calendar days of receipt of notification of conditional contract award.

**Maine Grid Resilience Grant Program**

**RFA# 202312239**

**Application Form**

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Applicants must use the embedded application document to complete their application (along with any additional documentation described in the RFA and in form). The application document can be accessed by double clicking on the icon above.

Applicants must also provide a certificate of insurance on a standard ACORD form (or the equivalent) evidencing the Bidder’s general liability, professional liability and any other relevant liability insurance policies that might be associated with the proposed services.

1. Maine PUC Docket 2021-00039. <https://mpuc-cms.maine.gov/CQM.Public.WebUI/Common/CaseMaster.aspx?CaseNumber=2021-00039> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. LD 1959, [An Act Regarding Utility Accountability and Grid Planning for Maine’s Clean Energy Future](https://legislature.maine.gov/legis/bills/getPDF.asp?paper=SP0697&item=19&snum=130) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Maine PUC Docket 2022-00322. <https://mpuc-cms.maine.gov/CQM.Public.WebUI/Common/CaseMaster.aspx?CaseNumber=2022-00322> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. State of Maine Renewable Energy Goals Market Assessment. <https://www.maine.gov/energy/studies-reports-working-groups/current-studies-working-groups/renewable-energy-market-assessment> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Maine Energy Storage Market Assessment. <https://www.maine.gov/energy/studies-reports-working-groups/current-studies-working-groups/energy-storage-assessment> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Maine Clean Energy Workforce Analysis Report. <https://www.maine.gov/energy/sites/maine.gov.energy/files/inline-files/2022%20Maine%20Clean%20Energy%20Workforce%20Report.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. As defined in BIL Section 40101(h)(2) for the purpose of this grant program, a Small Utility sells not more than 4,000,000 megawatt hours of electricity per year. Note that an entity that is not a transmission and distribution utility may satisfy this definition of Small Utility (refer to “Eligible Entities” above.) BIL Section 40101(d)(6) requires that the percentage of funding made available to small utilities shall not be less than the percentage of customers in the State that are served by those entities. The GEO has determined that the share of Maine’s set aside for small utilities can be no less than 25% for current and future years of this program. Therefore, for this FY 2022 and FY 2023 application cycle, the small utility set-aside = 25% \* $4,146,309 = $1,036,577. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Access the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CJEST) here: <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#3/33.47/-97.5> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)